6222.0 - Job Search Experience, Australia, Jul 2005

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Older people are unemployed for longer: ABS

Job seekers who reported that they were considered 'too old' by employers had a median duration of unemployment more than three times that of all job seekers, according to analysis released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

The median time all job seekers were unemployed was 12 weeks at July 2005 compared to 39 weeks for those who said employers considered them too old.

One in five (21%) unemployed people were 45 years or older at July 2005. Almost half (49%) of unemployed people aged 55 years and over said that their main difficulty in finding work was that they were 'considered too old by employers'. This was also the main difficulty reported by over a quarter (26%) of unemployed people aged 45-54 years.

The number of unemployed people has fallen by 8% from 528,200 people in July 2004 to 484,800 in July 2005. The median duration of unemployment dropped from 16 weeks in July 2004 to 12 weeks at July 2005. The proportion of unemployed people who have been unemployed for 12 months or more (long term unemployed) has also fallen, from 21% to 18%.

Younger job seekers (15-24 years) made up 40% of unemployed people in July 2005. Their main difficulty in finding work was 'insufficient work experience' - identified by 17% of those aged 15-19 years and 16% of those aged 20-24 years. Job seekers with 'insufficient work experience' had a median duration of unemployment of 12 weeks.

About one in two (53%) job starters (people who started their current job in the 12 months to July 2005) had been looking for work for less than a year. A further 5% had been looking for one year or more, while 42% did not look for work at all.

Further details can be found in **Job Search Experience, Australia, July 2005** (cat. no. 6222.0).

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